

THE MARRIAGE CYCLE: GAUNA

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the *lots* belonging to the girl's mother and the others drop as much as they can afford into the *lots* of the other women. During this time neither the bride nor the groom is present. 585

The *marhas* must now be untied for it has served its purpose and both the bride and the groom are called for this, the groom being seated in his *palki* ready for his departure. There is singing and dancing around the *marhas*. The boy leaves his *palki* and enters the girl's house and the two are again tied together and the boy crowned. They come out side by side and both get into the *palki* which is to carry the bridegroom to his home. The women of the house take a pice in their right hand and waving it over the couple give it to the bearers of the *palki*. The women perform the wave ceremony yet once again, but this time do not use money but instead a *supa* (winnowing fan), and all the time the drummer beats the drum vigorously. The *palki*, however, does not move off, as the knot must be untied and the girl gets out, for she is not yet ready to go to her husband. The girl disappears into her house and the women go in with her. The two groups of men move out toward the edge of the village and a short distance beyond they bid each other farewell; thus comes the end of the second part of the wedding cycle.

The *marhas* is taken down four to eight days after the *sadi*. It is torn down by the *swas* who is helped by four or five men. The eight supporting poles are of no particular significance now and are usually thrown somewhere near the house where they are eventually used for fuel. The *magrohas* must be treated differently. Sometimes it is just left in the ground and grows into a tree, or if it should fail to do this it rots away. If it is removed, as is the usual procedure, it should not be carelessly thrown aside. Sometimes it is kept in the house, but more frequently is carried by the women, who sing and chant as they go, to a near-by stream or tank where it is ceremonially thrown into the water. Afterwards the area is plastered with cow dung to make the whole spick and span. [237]

(4) *Gauna*: The Return of the Groom for his Bride. The third part of the marriage cycle is called the *gauna*, literally the going or moving. On this occasion the girl goes for the first time to the boy's home. Up till now she has not been alone with him, nor even talked to him in any confidential way. She knows nothing of the women-folk in the boy's house with whom she has to live for a time until she has a home of her own. The time lapsing between the *sadi* and the *gauna* depends upon the ages of the couple; in certain cases where both have reached the age of puberty the *gauna* may immediately [591]

CHAPTER VI

THE SOCIAL UNIT: THE FAMILY

THE KOL FAMILY. The basis of Kol society is found in the family. [This family is patrilinear and patrilocal, with a recognition of the bilateral kinship group because important social relations are observed with the kin on both sides. Nevertheless the household usually contains only dependent members from the father's side,] but there are no taboos for the other side of the family and visiting is allowed back and forth freely and without hindrance. No trace was found of a rupture in the parent-in-law relationship and no restrictions either in talking or associating were traced. In all, however, the family stands out as a distinct unit separate from the wider life of the community. 59 546 [574] [606]

In a typical Kol family under the one roof will usually be found the husband, the wife (or wives), unmarried children, and occasionally some dependent member or members of the father's family, such as a widowed grandparent. Soon after marriage the Kol son usually sets up a home for himself. In the more primitive sections it is unusual to find a married son and his wife living with his parents. In the more Hinduized communities, where the Kols are better off and can afford more elaborate houses, married sons and their wives were frequently found living with the boy's parents. In one such home in Barela, for example, there were two married sons and their wives living with the boys' parents. This seems though to be an imitation of the Hindu family system, rather than a true Kol institution. The older dependents are found in the house only if their own homes are broken up by death. One occasionally finds an old couple living together in a little hut, and when one or the other dies the surviving member goes to live in a son's or another relative's house. In one centre, however, four such persons were found, each living alone in a little hut. They were either not wanted or had no relatives with whom they could reside. 184 511 596 [57]

In Barela and Kharara Ghat a survey was made of the number of people in each home or sheltered under one roof. The average number of people per house, excluding four houses where there was one each who was somehow *persona non grata* with relatives, was 3.9. In Kharara Ghat the average came to 4.8 persons per house. The 1931 Central Provinces Census Report reveals that primitive tribes average 3.8 children per family. The distribution of people was as follows: 592 162

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PROPERTY AND INHERITANCE

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Should a dispute arise over the division of the property the matter must be settled by the *panch*. They will probably distribute it as equally as possible among the sons. Should this not be satisfactory to all concerned the sons have the right to appeal to the law courts of the land and have the matter settled there. Among Kols this is seldom, if ever, done. 428 578 623 692

The female members of the family do not enjoy equal rights with the males. A girl, when married, loses her membership in her family, and becomes a member of the new home. When she goes to live with her husband she takes nothing with her apart from her clothes and some personal adornments. It was noted by Russell and Hiralal that : 421 562 591 171 428

Succession among the Mundas passes to sons only. Failing there, the property goes to the father or brother if any..... Daughters get no share in the inheritance and are allotted among the sons just like livestock. Thus if a man dies leaving three sons and three daughters and thirty head of cattle, on a division each son would get ten head of cattle and one sister ; but should there be only one sister, they wait until she marries and divide the bride price.¹

This quotation, from their article on the Kols, does not apply to the specific Kol tribe, but nevertheless we found instances of this tendency.

There is a difference of opinion as to the disposition of the property if there are no sons and only girls in the family. In many places it was affirmed that property could pass to the daughters if there were no sons. This was always her own property and nothing could alienate it from her, not even her marriage. When such a girl is married she takes her property with her and such property is considered her own and does not become a portion of her husband's wealth. If she should ever leave his home due either to divorce or quarrel she still remains its owner. Keeping it thus in her name and under her control is a protection to her in case of need. At her death, such property, if still existing, is supposed to revert to her father's family, his brothers or their heirs. When a wife dies her clothes are disposed of as noted in Chapter VII. Her metal jewellery is kept and may be worn by a new wife or passed on to the sons. 428 422 562 [586]

¹ Russell and Hiralal, *Op. Cit.*, Vol. III, p. 618.